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or two for the background, and hydrangeas or other bright-hued blossoms in front have a good effect. Fill in the interstices with moss.

AMATEUR WOOD-CARVING.

SINCE we first treated of amateur wood-carving in an introductory article by Calista Halsey in the initial number of this magazine, many persons who have subse-

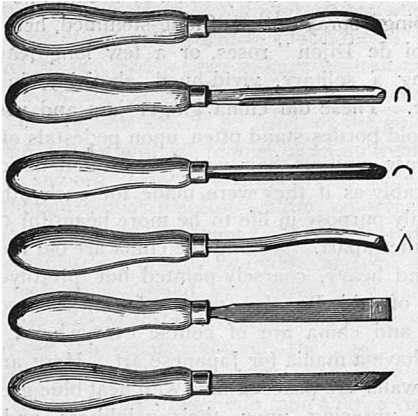


FIG. 1.—WOOD-CARVING TOOLS.

quently become subscribers have requested us to resume the subject. Without repeating the sensible remarks of Miss Halsey, who is a practical wood-carver—the number of THE ART AMATEUR containing them is still in print—we reproduce some valuable hints to beginners in the art from Charles G. Leland's useful little book, "The Minor Arts," just published by Macmillan & Co. Before quoting from Mr. Leland's manual we may add some information which it does not give, it having been written for England rather than America.

First, as to tools: For the amateur the six which we illustrate herewith (Fig. 1) are sufficient for ordinary purposes. They are from the catalogue of A. H. Shipman, of Rochester, N. Y.

These are useful in showing the instruments used; but in the diagram (Fig. 2) from Mr. Leland's book the shapes of cuts made by the principal instruments are more fully given. The graining gouge and macaroni are not much used by American amateurs.

As to materials: Some of the woods mentioned in English books on wood-carving are not known in this country. We have prepared the following table as showing the various properties of woods, native and foreign, suitable for the use of American amateur carvers:

Toughness.	Handsome Figure.	Elasticity.
Beech.	Bird's eye maple.	Ash.
Elm.	Selected Walnut.	Hazel.
Oak.	Oak.	Hickory.
Walnut.	Mahogany.	Lancewood.
Lignumvitæ (imp.).	Mountain Ash.	Snakewood.
	Cocobola.	
Perfume.		Soft and Tough.
Sassafras.	Black Ebony.	
Camphor wood (imp.).	Tulip (imp.).	
Cedar (imp.).	Satinwood (imp.).	White Basswood.
Rosewood (imp.).		
Sandalwood (imp.).		
Satinwood (imp.).		

Let us return to Mr. Leland. This gentleman, who is nothing if not practical, sets his pupil to work in the following business-like fashion:

"Take a panel of well-seasoned oak or walnut, six inches wide, twelve long, and one-third or one-half an inch in thickness. Draw or trace on any paper of the same superficial dimensions as the panel a simple pattern. Fasten this, with drawing pins or with gum at the edges, on the wood. Take the pattern-wheel (Fig. 3), which is like a spur, and pressing its points firmly on the edges of the pattern so as to penetrate into the wood, mark out the whole design. On removing the paper you will find the outline pricked in dots upon the wood. If you cannot obtain the wheel, use a piece of sharp new knitting-needle set in a handle or a sharp bodkin. Now, if you were to simply take the wheel or the sharp point, or a nail filed across twice at the point, and indent the background full of little holes, dots, or ragged work, and then oil the whole, you would have a good effect. But to go a step farther. Before indenting or grounding, take the V-tool or a very small gouge and following the line of the pattern-wheel, keeping

accurately close to it, outside, cut a light groove. Now attend closely to this advice: Hold the handle of the tool in your right hand; keep the wrist of the left on the panel, and guide the tool with the forefinger, or with the fore and middle fingers, of the left hand. Be very careful that neither the left hand nor any portion of it gets before the point of the tool, for should the latter slip you might cut your fingers cruelly. If you undertake to carve a loose piece of wood by holding it with the left hand while you cut, you will soon meet with an accident. Remember from the very first cut to bear on lightly, to remove just as little wood as possible, and to keep perfect command of the tool. Cut away a mere film at first, the less the better; be satisfied with a grain at a time, and make your cuts for a long time as short as you can. You will probably, in spite of this instruction and of the best resolution, be tempted into trying to get on rapidly, the gouge or parting-tool or V will dig in deeply, you will venture on a bold push, or try to pry up or break the wood, and then your tool will break its edge or slip. But if you will make the whole outline, at first, a mere indication, you will do well. Think only of learning how to hold the tool and how to acquire an easy mastery over it. It is very easy indeed to do all this, without being shown how, if you choose to cut very lightly. Most beginners are, however, in such a hurry to have some work to show as a proof of their skill, that they quite forget that the object of the first lessons is not to have something pretty to exhibit, but to learn how to carve. You understand that it is very easy to cut a straight groove from end to end of the panel, and only a little more difficult to go across it. But in running this groove from corner to corner, the grain lends itself to your cut on one side, and opposes it on the other. Therefore, to cut deeply you must, to avoid tearing or splintering, cut one side in one way, and then turn the wood round and cut the other reversed. This continually occurs in all carving.



FIG. 3.



FIG. 4.

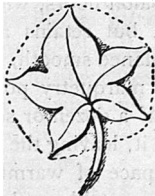


FIG. 5.



FIG. 6.

Of course, the resistance is less in close or fine-grained woods than in those which are soft and fibrous. A very little cutting with a gouge on any waste bit of wood will render this perfectly clear. Practise on waste wood till you can run a line easily with any gouge. Having finished your groove-outline, go over it again and deepen it. Now take a chisel, say one-fourth of an inch in diameter, or a flat gouge of the same size, and, still cutting as lightly and securely as possible, remove the wood between the pattern-edges. This of course will leave the pattern in relief. When you first made the outline with a gouge (U or V), you



FIG. 7.—WOOD-CARVING DESIGN.

were told not to cut too close to the dots. In fact, you should always let it slope outward. Now, in removing or cutting away the wood, begin close to the pattern, and cut very lightly, indeed with only half the edge on

one side. This will leave a long mound or rising surface on the ground between the lines. Then shave this away very gradually until all the pattern is in relief. Make every cut clean, clear away every chip as you remove the wood, and never tear or dig the wood, but always cut. As General Seaton advises in his excellent 'Manual of Wood Carving': 'Leave no rags, jags, or fragments; clear out completely every angle and corner; get your work as smooth as possible with whatever tool you may be using; and let every stroke of chisel or gouge

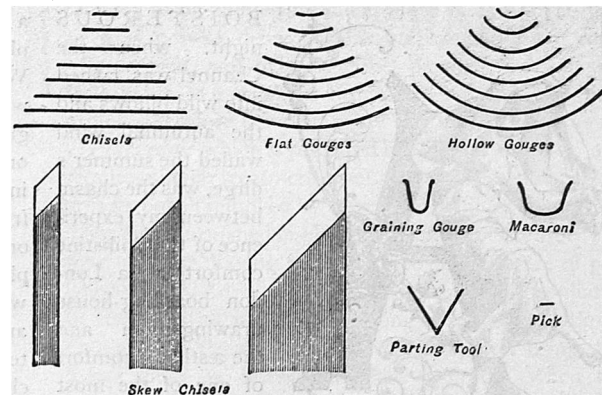


FIG. 2.—WOOD-CARVING TOOLS.

be made and regulated by purpose and design.' If the pupil can master the few simple rules which I have already laid down, and apply them; that is to say, if he can cut carefully, a little at a time, and the less the better, holding his tool as directed, leaving his pattern sloping outward, till finished, he can carve wood. Hasten slowly.

"You have now removed the wood from the background. Make it as level as you can. If you cannot get it quite smooth, you may scrape it with a chisel, a bit of window glass, or a curved file. Then, if desired, gently round the edges of the design with a rasp and sand-paper. It is not artistic to finish leaves or fine carving in this manner, but it may be done to imitate worn or old work, or to make a strong relief in light against the ground. If you cannot well rub sand-paper into some places, take small sticks, cut them into suitable shape, dip their ends into strong glue, and before it dries put them into sand. When dry these will serve as polishers. When all is finished, dust and knock the sand well out of your work, and prick or indent the holes in the background with wheel, piercer or stamp. The deeper and denser they are the greater the relief will be when the whole is oiled. Then apply linseed or sweet oil copiously. Wipe it dry. If you wish to polish the pattern, use only oil, no beeswax. Then with a soft pine stick rub long and carefully.

"In carving, do not be deterred at first by the hardness of any wood. You can get to prefer oak to walnut with practice. Keep your tools very sharp. It is not necessary to give careful instruction as to how this is to be done, for there is hardly a place in the world where there is not a tool-seller, a carpenter, smith, or tinker who can show you the method. The V-tool and gouges differ from carpenters' gouges in this, that they should be sharpened somewhat inside the point as well as out, and this is done with a bit of Turkey or Arkansas oil-stone, called a 'slip,' ground down to fit the inside. Set it in a piece of wood, wedged in, and rub the tool on it, and you will not cut your fingers. When you can afford it, buy a revolving grindstone; until then, whenever you break an edge you must have it ground for you. After tools have been ground, or had their edges simply sharpened, they must be 'set' on an oil-stone, which gives them the greatest keenness. For this, Turkey oil-stones are used for readily and roughly setting, the Arkansas for fine finish. As you work, set your tools occasionally, and then strop them on leather. Wood-carvers' chisels are ground on both sides, so as to make a roof-shaped edge. Working a joiner's chisel, you must turn it continually; not so with the carver's.

"If a crack or hole occur in your work, make some dust with a coarse file from the wood, convert it into a paste with glue, and fill the cavity with it. For dark wood, powdered cocoanut-shell is admirable. With these dusts and Salisbury glue you can make artificial wood, which can be carved or moulded to replace any broken piece. Glue mixed with nitric acid while still liquid and warm may be

kept in a liquid state, if corked in a bottle, for months. This glue has the valuable quality of not drying too quickly; but it has a sharp, unpleasant smell.

"If you really wish to carve well, to make the art profitable, and not merely play at it, do not begin with your head full of elegant, frivolous, modern, Frenchy

and plumes, inexhaustible acanthuses, and renaissance filigree. Stick to real leaves and study them. In making leaves which have lobes, or several points, like ivy, begin by cutting out a single piece (Fig 5.), and then cut out the notches between the lobes, going from the points inward. To level the ground, a flat or quarter-round gouge may often be used. Place it almost upright, and work it along from side to side, cutting out the marks shown in Fig. 6. Then go over it with the same motion sideways. These lines imitate the ruggedness of certain trees. If you carve a furred animal, you can finish it with a kind of gouge with teeth, used by shoemakers; another and a better tool is a rasp, which requires a peculiar drawing and sweeping, but which imitates fur exactly.

"Running lines is the first process in wood-carving; stabbing-out, the second; hosing (from the Italian abozzare, or the French ébaucher, to sketch) is 'roughing out,' and the fourth stage is finishing. A pretty and easy variety of work is the sunk carving, or intaglio, which consists of patterns sunk into the wood, cut chiefly with light gouges. To carve a casket or

this labor-saving arrangement, we do not recommend it. A carved panel or any other object, to have its full value as a work of art, should be solid and genuine. Glueing on the "alto-rilievo" may satisfy the amateur of to-day, who works for amusement only, but the artist wood-carvers of olden times would have been ashamed



FIG. 8.—DESIGN FOR WOOD-CARVING.

trifles and meaningless bits of rococo, but cut several simple panels, preferably of Gothic or Celtic design, in which lines and curves form the pattern. A real old Gothic panel is a treasure, since by studying it we learn how, with the fewest and simplest tools, and the least amount of cutting, the best effects were produced. Do not begin with a leaf as a model. Simple, flat carving should be mastered in detail before the varied and difficult curves of the simplest leaves are attempted. Now, having learned to run an outline with V tool or gouge, and then to shave away the wood, you may, with any pattern, try 'stabbing out.' Take a tool corresponding exactly to the outline of the design (Fig. 4), the small mark indicating the edge of a gouge. Apply it accurately, but sloping outward, and with a blow of a mallet, or a push with your hand, stab the wood. Having cut all round the lines, proceed to ground it, or cut down to a ground. With a flat gouge or chisel begin a little way from the cuts already made, and cut toward them. Then with flat or half-round gouge clear the wood in the centre away. To avoid making mistakes, it is a good plan for beginners, after pricking out the pattern, if the wood be dark, to go over the pattern with Chinese white water-color and a fine camel's-hair pencil. If a panel should warp you must lay a damp cloth on the hollow or concave side, and keep the whole under pressure, or else hold the convex or rounded side to the fire. If you have a very broad and thin panel, split it carefully into two pieces, or make it of two such pieces, and glue them together after carving. I have seen Gothic panels thus made in two pieces. Having carved a few panels, obtain a carved leaf, or a real one, and imitate it first in wax, clay, or moist leather. This is easier than carving, but it will lead you up to it very speedily. We will suppose you have something like Fig. 9. Having stabbed this work out, make with gouges the undulating curves and hollows of the leaves. Cut from the points of the leaves backward. Do not under-cut very much, or try to make the leaves very thin. Cut the hollows as much as you can, but you may use rounded files also. For oak-leaves, which are to be specially commended as studies, large flattish gouges are essential. Practise on a piece of waste wood the making of deep semicircular 'sweep-cuts,' i.e., pushing the gouge before you and confidently turning it around as you cut. When you can do this boldly, sinking the edge as you cut, and then raising it, or recovering it during the cut without tearing the wood, you can carve leaves well. This was the secret of

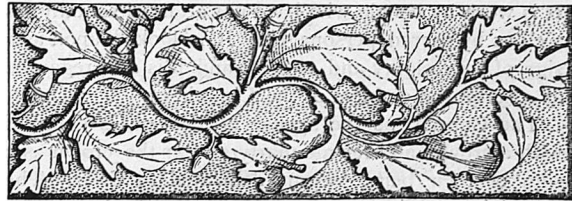


FIG. 9.—DESIGN FOR WOOD-CARVING.

of such a sham. Mr. Leland does not go further in his instructions than as regards low relief carving. "Carving 'in the round,'" he says, "is literal sculpture, but it will present no difficulty whatever to the pupil who knows how to manage the tools, who has executed a little deep panel-cutting, and modelled a little in clay. Carving game, such as wild ducks hanging by the legs, may be regarded as the first step in carving in the round, and there are abundance of models in it to be found."

For the benefit of amateur wood-carvers who have already made some progress in the art, in our next issue we shall supplement Mr. Leland's designs for low relief with an example of carving in the round. An eagle for a lectern will be the subject, and full directions for executing the same will be given.

#### RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM IN ART.

##### II.

THE symbolism of objects, animate and inanimate, embraces a vast number of emblems used by the early Christians, many of which can be clearly traced to Pagan origin, their meanings having been altered to suit the new faith. Borrowing the ideas of one nation and embodying them into another form of religion is of very early date. The notion of depicting the angels of God with wings was probably borrowed from the winged figures of Nineveh, and the description of the four beasts in Revelation differs but little from the accounts of the strange animals, half human and half beast, discovered in the Chaldaic and Babylonian remains. The palm branch is placed in the hands of all martyrs, as a token of the description of death they suffered for their faith. It was also the classical emblem of victory, and used by the Greeks for many years before the birth of Christ.

The fish (and not the cross) is the earliest known emblem of the Christians; it was borrowed from the pagan dolphin, and from the fish god of the Egyptians. It is sometimes placed in the hands of the apostles, to denote either their calling or the occupation assigned to them by Christ—that of fishers of men; but when found on ancient coins, on the tombs of martyrs, or on rings, it is to be interpreted as a figure of baptism or as one of the types of Christ.

The glory, or aureole, selected by the Christians as the symbol of sanctity, was, by the earliest traditions among the heathen, the special attribute that distinguished the creative power from minor deities.

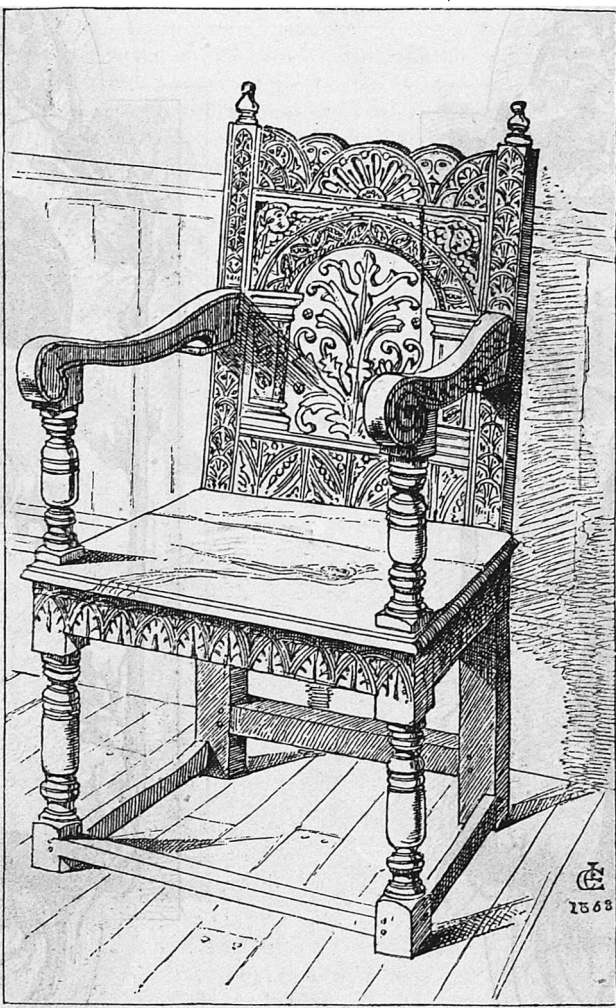


FIG. 10.—CARVED WOODEN HALL CHAIR.

IN POSSESSION OF THE EARL OF MOUNT EDGEUMBE AT COTHELE, DEVON.

box, do so while it is in pieces. That is, make it, or have it made, in dove-tail, or tailed and mitred, and after carving, join it together."

It will be seen that shallow cutting and grounding a panel is only a very slight advance on pricking out a pattern with a wheel; and that cutting a panel in high relief and with foliage must be very easy for any one who has spent, let us say, three weeks at simple designs in low relief, strictly adhering to the rules which Mr. Leland lays down here. He says: "The deepest cutting will, in turn, be quite as free from difficulty, especially if we cut as Grinling Gibbons did, from successive layers of boards and glue them together. Apropos of these labor-saving layers of boards, you will often find that a single ornament will look

well in high relief, as, for instance, a fox's head in the centre of a panel, or box-lid, or a wreath in a door. To avoid cutting away, perhaps pounds of chips, you will only need to carve the alto-rilievo and glue it into the centre. In Germany, objects for this finishing work are commonly sold in shops." Convenient as doubtless is

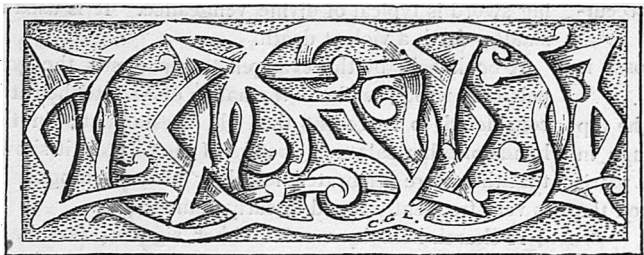


FIG. 11.—DESIGN FOR WOOD-CARVING.

Gothic carving, to readily master a bold and sketchy yet accurate style, to sweep without fear into curves and depressions, to mould the wood with the gouge. Be satisfied for a long time with simple tracery and oak-leaves, with animals roughly but effectively rounded; and do not think for many a day of humming-birds

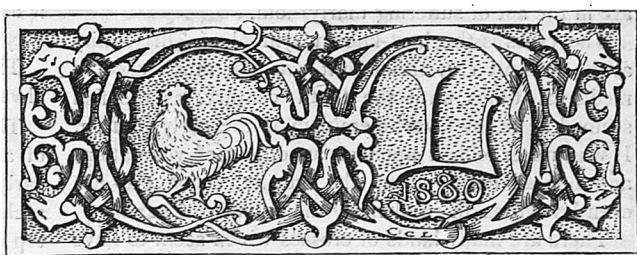


FIG. 12.—DESIGN FOR WOOD-CARVING.

The aureole is of many shapes and colors, the glory that surrounds the heads of the Trinity being distinguished from the circle around the heads of martyrs and saints by rays emanating from the head and terminating in a golden circle. Sometimes instead, golden rays are arranged in the form of a Greek cross.





PLATE LXXI.—DESIGN FOR WOOD-CARVING.

CONTRIBUTED TO THE ART AMATEUR BY L. H. RUSSELL, STRATFORD, CONN.

(For instructions for Wood-carving, see pages 124 and 125.)